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177 in the native social order. Apart from money and clothes, the material
167 articles, habits, and ideas which they have acquired abroad soon decay from disuse, or come to serve for ostentation only, since they have no functional relevance to the economic life and social structure of the native society.

178 The Tallensi, in short, still preserve the culture bequeathed to them by their forefathers and the social structure of their own, homogeneous society. Their economy is a primitive, static, subsistence economy. They continue to farm by the same methods and with the same tools and the same knowledge as their forefathers had. They grow no cash crops and produce no surplus of local crops for sale outside Taleland. The introduction of British currency and the opening up of the country have accelerated local exchange and slightly mitigated the hardship of winning a living by primitive technical methods from a soil of no great fertility. They have not otherwise affected the livelihood of 99 per cent. of the people.

797 Literacy and Christianity had, until 1936, barely touched the Tallensi.
872 A few children had been sent to school reluctantly in deference to the commands of the District Commissioners. Only one stayed the course and left school with a moderate command of English and the three R's. Two or three younger boys were still at school at Gambaga or Tamale. The nearest mission station to the Tallensi is that of the White Fathers at Bolaga, outside Taleland. Up to 1936 the missionaries had made only an occasional visit of reconnaissance to the nearby Tale settlements. They had succeeded in attracting only two or three Tale youths to their school. These were the sons of two ambitious, and, from the native point of view, upstart headmen who were keen to have their sons taught the white man's skills the better to serve their own political ambitions. The only one of these youths who achieved a fair degree of literacy and accepted the Christian faith was in Government employment.

177 Most of the social changes that have occurred and are taking place with
636 increasing rapidity in Taleland are due to a single powerful extraneous
648 factor, British rule. The Tallensi, in common with other tribes of these parts, put up a truculent resistance to British rule at first, and had to be subjugated by military operations and other punitive measures. The last pocket of Tale resistance, in the Tong Hills, was finally broken by a small armed force in 1911. The people of the Hills were expelled from their ancestral homes, which were razed to the ground, and lived in exile on the plains at the foot of the hills until they were permitted to return in 1935. Judging by the scanty memoranda of the Administrative officers of the decade 1911–21, the Tallensi gave them a good deal of trouble.

609 These events are still vividly remembered by the natives. Their fear
636 and suspicion of the white man was not unnatural since they had never before met him. However, their subjugation and the subsequent imposition of peace have produced in them a deep respect for the might and power of the white man. They have since learnt to have complete confidence in the justice and good intentions of the Administrative officers. They speak with gratitude of the benefits which the white man's peace

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has brought them. But in the background there still lurk traces of fear and suspicion, a sense of the inscrutability of the white man.

The influence of British rule has naturally been most marked in Tale political life. At first it was directed towards two main ends: 'to maintain the peace between the Administration and the native communities as well as amongst the latter, and to ensure a sufficient supply of labour and local materials from the native population for keeping up roads and rest houses. The Administrative officers laid down boundaries, meted out justice, and backed up chiefs and headmen, mostly appointed by themselves, in the exercise of coercive powers over the mass of the people. Nothing was known about the country or the people, and the Administrative officers had to rely on their own sense of justice and their own ideas of what was in the interests of the population. The natives look back on this period with few regrets. They describe it as a time when extortion was widely practised not only by the police, the soldiers, the interpreters, and others who stood between them and the District Commissioners, but also by their newly empowered chiefs and headmen. They learnt to think of any official or unofficial servant of the white man as armed with arbitrary authority which it would be futile to resist.

The outstanding political changes due to this period were the authority given to chiefs and headmen, and the unofficial tribunals held by them. These grew up gradually out of the need to keep the peace; for the ancient method of settling disputes was by negotiation backed by armed self-help. From the native point of view the most valuable relic of this period is the embryonic legal system which grew up then. Armed self-help has disappeared, but some of the values connected with it remain. The other institutions of the native political organization retain their vigour. They function side by side with the institutions imposed by British rule, for they serve different ends and correspond to different values. It is often an uneasy partnership leading to insoluble conflicts. Most of the political troubles of the Tallensi since 1921 can be traced to the clash between interests and loyalties springing from the native political system and those created by the new political dispensation and its accompanying economic changes. For the first time in its history a few men of outstanding wealth have arisen in Taleland by extorting goods and services from their fellows on the strength of their political powers, or by exploiting opportunities due to the opening up of the country. And this has brought social friction in its train.

This period of British rule came to an end about 1931. Between 1931 and 1936 the Administration undertook a complete political reorganization of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast. The principles of what is commonly called Indirect Rule were applied. Native Authorities were established, a graded scale of direct taxation was introduced, a policy of economic development was started, and social services were multiplied. The effects of this policy will not be discernible for some years.

Taleland is a very small portion of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast. But in its culture and social structure, as in its geography and climate, it is typical of the whole plateau north of the Gambaga scarp.

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society is a function of its segmentary relations to other like regions and to more inclusive regions, up to the limit of the widest frame of social reference relevant for that region. In consequence, social groups are identified in relation to one another by a technique of contraposition. This is very clearly seen among the Tallensi.

Cultural Segmentation of the Tallensi

From Zuarungu one can see the silhouette of the Tong Hills bounding the horizon seven miles to the south. That, say the people of Zuarungu, is where the Tallensi live. As a group they consider themselves to be quite distinct from the Tallensi, though many individuals have kinsmen among the latter—their own mothers' people, or more distant cognatic kinsmen, or affinal relatives. Even nowadays, when women and children can travel safely anywhere, intercourse between Zuarungu and the Tallensi is confined almost entirely to trade in the markets. In former times it was more than a Zuarungu man's life was worth to venture amongst the Tallensi unless he had kinsfolk there to protect him.

Between Zuarungu and the Tong Hills stretches an unbroken chain of settlements—Biuk, Ba'ari, Zubiuŋ, Tongo, Wakii, and Soog. The people of Biuk speak Gorni and consider themselves an outpost of Zuarungu. But a number of them live across the watercourse which separates their land from that of Ba'ari, side by side with Ba'ari families and farming on Ba'ari soil.[1] Such overlapping of contiguous settlements is common. The Ba'ari people are Tallensi, though a great many of them understand Gorni as easily as their mother tongue owing to their contiguity with Goris. Gorni forms have even crept into their vocabulary. Between them and their Gore neighbours there is much intermarriage; but the insistence on their distinctness remains. The picture is the same from whichever direction one enters Taleland. At Gar I was once told 'We are Namnam-Tallensi'—an accurate enough description of their linguistically and culturally intermediate position.

And yet, everywhere along the frontier the Tong Hills are pointed out as the real centre of the Tallensi. To the testimony of their neighbours may be added that of the Administration which has always regarded the Tallensi as a distinct, if amorphous, political unit.

The easiest if most superficial approach to the social structure of a society is through the nomenclature of social identification, the techniques by which people sort out their relations to one another in order to know how to conduct themselves. But nomenclature, like the conduct it tends to precipitate, is always a function of a situation, not an absolute classification.

Foreigners and their neighbours have a single label for all the Tallensi. The latter equally make no distinction in nomenclature between one Goraŋ and another, or one Nabt and another, no matter where he may come from, when the circumstances require no more precise specification.

This technique of identification is based on locality, direction, propinquity, and actual or alleged contrasts of language and institutions; it is a technique of contraposition arising from the segmentary structure of the society, and is the commonest method of social classification employed

[1] And Biuk is also linked to the Tallensi by clanship as we shall see (Ch. IV).

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776 is to pay over the gifts and sacrifices he has promised the *Bɔyar* in return.
788 Later, when the child is old enough to travel, it is brought to the *Bɔyar* to be ritually dedicated to it and named, and thus brought into communion with it. Wards of the *Bɔyar* have prescribed names according to [551] their order of birth. First-borns are always Tɔŋ or Bɔyare; later children have names compounded of these two names and suffixes indicative of sex or birth order—Tɔndoog or Tɔnpɔk or Tɔnzoo, and so forth. A girl [582] ward must remain chaste until she marries; and when she is given in marriage she has to be released from this bond by means of gifts and sacrifices to the *Bɔyar* before she goes to her husband.

769 The ritual dominion of the Hill Talis' External *Bɔya* extends, also, to
648 whole clans and lineages of non-Tale tribes as we shall see later. Here
574 it is enough to mention that every External *Bɔyar* of the Hill Talis has a traditional network of client lineages and clans among the adjacent non-Tale tribes, the Mamprusi, Dagomba, Bulisi, Woolisi, and even Mossi; and nowadays also in Ashanti and the Colony. Every year, at the time of the Harvest Festivals, these client lineages send messengers with gifts and sacrifices to the *Bɔyar* to which they adhere, to give thanks for the benefits of the past year and to pray for good crops, good health, peace, and offspring during the coming year. Client lineages also observe the totemic and other ritual rules of the *Bɔyar*. From time to time reciprocal visits are paid to the client lineages by representatives of the Hill Talis [609] lineages that sponsor them before the *Bɔyar*. These visitors, coming as emissaries of the *Bɔyar*, are received with the hospitality due to honoured kinsmen and travel long distances in hostile country under the safe conduct of their client associates without danger. It is chiefly from its client lineages that pilgrims come to a particular *Bɔyar*.

784 The personal totemic avoidances of wards of a Talis *Bɔyar* are instances
776 of a more general rule. It often happens that a child's spirit-guardian is a
184 matrilateral ancestor or ancestress, its father's maternal grandfather, for instance. Then the ward (*sɛyɔraan*) is obliged to observe the totemic avoidances which were held by his spirit-guardian during the latter's lifetime. He must do so, according to native doctrine, because he will have to offer sacrifices throughout his lifetime to his spirit-guardian; and as a sacrifice is an act of communion, both between the living, and between the living and the dead, he would be unable either to offer or to partake of sacrifices to his spirit-guardian if he did not keep the latter's taboos. Thus he would nullify the bond of mystical tutelage and lay himself open to inevitable disasters. He would also gravely damage his relations with the agnatic descendants of his spirit-guardian, upon whom falls the duty of maintaining the cult of the latter's spirit and whom he will sometimes have to join in sacrifice. There are many people among the Namoos who observe Talis taboos for this reason, and many Talis who avoid both the totems of their own clan and those of other clans as well. The fowl taboo of the Namoos is an exception to this rule, for the obvious reason that it is restricted to first-born children. Even if a man had to avoid the fowl in his lifetime, it ceases to be relevant after his death, and is no longer remembered by his descendants. But the rule does apply to the ancillary totems of those Namoo clans and lineages that have any, such as the

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as if the name could have a character moulding, — a soul shaping, as he might put it, — effect. Such names, moreover, make up a living record of notable events or persons or achievements in the father's life.

It is in this sense, mainly because of what they symbolise and record, that names and naming customs can be said to be part of a people's oral literature. There is no better testimony to this than in one of Professor WESTERMANN's own linguistic explorations, the enchanting life story which he recorded of the Ewe Bonifatius Foli[5]). It will be remembered that the story opens with Foli's explanation of how he came by his name. Had he been born a commoner, he says, he would have been called Kofi, the day name for a male born on Friday. But he was of chiefly descent and so received the corresponding aristocratic name, a name which no commoner would normally bear.

The ethnographical and linguistic writings on Africa abound with examples pertinent to my theme, but I want to illustrate it from my own field work among the Tallensi of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast[6]). All Tallensi are curious and alert in the matter of personal names. Early in my stay among them I once asked a young man what was the point of name giving. This is what he answered: "(The reason) why they give names is that you may know so-and-so and the other one, and know what he looks like; for if they did not confer names on you they would not know you." The name stands for the individual, is part of what marks him out from others. This feeling about the individuality of a name is shown in the delight with which Tallensi meet someone bearing the same name as themselves. Two persons with the same name call each other "*n-wu'uri*", (my name-sake) and exchange friendly banter.

The Tallensi have a technical term for the giving of a name, *pit wu'uri*, to confer a name; and this term has a cognate which, we shall see, is very revealing, *pot wu'uri* to utter or announce a name. Let us consider, first, the giving of names. This is quite a complex matter. I realised this shortly after arriving among the Tallensi, on the occasion of Ma'an-ɔb's funeral. Just before any burial, an elder offers a red cock to the dead with an invocation that he may depart and join his ancestors. I was struck by the fact that the elder, in this case, addressed the dead man as Yin, not as Ma'an-ɔb; and this led to a train of enquiries.

I thus discovered that a person can have, and very commonly does have two given names. One is his *wu'ur-soo*, his open or everyday name; the other is his *seyorsoo wu'uri*, his spirit-guardian name. It is the latter name that is invoked at death and on other ritual occasions in which a person's well being is at issue. It is the name used, for instance, when a person's evil Pre-destiny is exorcised[7]). It is not a secret name. Though it is not usually known outside the circle of his close kin, those who normally share with him in sacrifices to common ancestors of

[5]) D. WESTERMANN, "Kindheitserinnerung des Togoneger Bonifatius Foli". *Mitt. d. Sem. f. Orient. Sprachen*, XXXIV, iii, 1931.

[6]) I have described much of the life and social organisation of the Tallensi in my two books *The Dynamics of Clanship among the Tallensi* (1945) and *The Web of Kinship among the Tallensi*, (1949).

[7]) For a fuller account of this notion and of the notion of the *seyor* see op. cit., *The Web of Kinship*, passim. See also R. S. RATTRAY, *Tribes of the Ashanti Hinterland*, vol. II. passim.